Teaching Writing in First-Year Studies: FIYS Orientation, May 2019

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Online Resources

[Writing Center](https://www.lakeforest.edu/academics/resources/writingcenter/)>[Faculty Resources](https://www.lakeforest.edu/academics/resources/writingcenter/faculty.php)> [First-Year Studies](https://www.lakeforest.edu/academics/resources/writingcenter/faculty-resources/first-year-studies/)

Writing Center>[Student Resources](https://www.lakeforest.edu/academics/resources/writingcenter/students.php)

[Office of Faculty Development](https://www.lakeforest.edu/academics/resources/ltc/faculty-development/)>[Resources for Teaching Writing](https://www.lakeforest.edu/academics/resources/ltc/faculty-development/writing.php)

my.lakeforest>[Incoming Student Advising](https://my.lakeforest.edu/ICS/Faculty/First_Year_Studies_Advising/) Scroll down to “Writing FIYS”

Moodle>[First-Year Writing Program](https://moodle.lakeforest.edu/course/view.php?id=2957)

* First-Year Writing Expectations Rubric with links to sample papers
* Resources for educating students about plagiarism

--Tracy McCabe, Director of Writing Programs [mccabe@lakeforest.edu](mailto:mccabe@lakeforest.edu). x5234.

First-Year Writing Program

As part of the General Education Curriculum, Lake Forest College has a First-Year Writing Requirement to ensure that students develop the writing skills they will need to succeed in their future college courses and beyond. Most students fulfill that requirement through completion of First-Year Studies, a writing-intensive course.

If you believe, however, that one of your students needs additional writing instruction, you may require them to take College Writing 100, a full-credit course, as one of their four courses in the spring semester. The Director of Writing Programs will solicit your recommendations during the fall semester; feel free to consult her if you are unsure whether a student would benefit from the course.

**Lake Forest College: First-Year Writing Expectations (9/14)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Criterion** | **Exceeds**  **Expectations** | **Meets Expectations** | **Does not meet expectations** |
| **Focus** | Argument is clear and provocative. Supports thesis with evidence from authoritative sources or analysis that is both thorough and careful. | Argument sufficiently demonstrates a thesis. | Thesis is missing or paper does not cover the idea stated in the thesis. |
| **Flow** | Ideas arranged in a logical order that is clear to the reader.  Transitions guide the reader through the argument.  Conclusion summarizes main idea and shows import of argument. | Ideas are organized logically.  Topic sentences are used to guide the reader.  Conclusion restates main idea. | Movement among ideas is abrupt or illogical. Paragraphs are not coherent. |
| **Depth** | Writer provides new information, clarity, or a unique perspective to scholarly discussion of the topic. | Paper shows some focused coverage of topic. | Paper appears to be hastily written with underdeveloped ideas. |
| **Use of Evidence** | Quotations are limited to striking statements or examples where precise wording is important.  Evidence strongly supports interpretation. | Material from other authors is properly credited and connected to focus of the paper.  Source material is properly understood. | Material from other authors is used without proper citation, and/or without consequence or significance. |
| **Grammar** | Writing follows the grammatical and spelling conventions of standard English. | Writing generally follows the grammatical and spelling conventions of standard English. | Writing is riddled with errors and imprecise expression. |
| **Voice/**  **Style** | Material from other authors is smoothly integrated. Word choice is precise and sophisticated.  Sentences are stylistically interesting. | Material from other authors is distinguishable from the writer’s ideas. Word choice is formal. Sentences vary from complex to simple. | Material from writer and other authors blends together. Word choice is colloquial. Sentence structure is simplistic. |

**Using the Writing Center: FAQ for FIYS Faculty**

*What does the Writing Center do?*

The Writing Center strives to support any writer on campus in reaching short- and long-term goals. Our mission is to empower students to invest in themselves as academic writers and, ultimately, apply skills and strategies they practice with a tutor to their own work. The Writing Center Coordinator is Kate Oakley. Please contact her with questions about the Center: [oakley@lakeforest.edu](mailto:oakley@lakeforest.edu). x5233.

*Who can use the Writing Center?*

Any current undergraduate or graduate student at Lake Forest College can use the Writing Center.

*What kinds of papers can students take to the Writing Center?*

Peer Tutors are trained to work on analytical, argumentative academic essays, so your students can bring any kind of academic writing assignment, including summary, response, reaction, critique, analysis, argumentative, and research papers. Tutors can teach students ways to edit application essays and creative works (stories, plays, etc.) for grammatical clarity, but they cannot advise on structure and content.

*Do tutors work on take-home essay exams?*

Tutors trust clients to tell them if the professor has given permission to work on the essay exam. If you do not want take-home essay exams to be reviewed with a tutor, please tell your class and write this on the assignment sheet.

*How can I familiarize my students with Writing Center services?*

* Show them the [Writing Center website](https://www.lakeforest.edu/academics/resources/writingcenter/) and how to use the online scheduler
* Visit the Writing Center in Hotchkiss with your class (contact the Coordinator)
* Invite the Writing Center Coordinator to your classroom
* Include a Writing Center note in your syllabus and/or distribute a Writing Center flier

*What is the difference between a standing, regular, and walk-in appointment?*

* A standing appointment is a weekly appointment on the same day, at the same time, with the same tutor. In a standing, professors and students identify long-term writing goals, and their tutors help them develop skills to reach these goals using reading or writing assignments throughout the semester.
* Standing appointments will be assigned over the summer and begin the first full week of classes.
* A regular appointment is one, forty-five-minute session that targets issues in one draft from one course; a regular appointment should take place after the student has a working understanding of the assignment and, if a research paper, a topic approved by the professor.
* A walk-in appointment is a twenty-minute session in which specific questions are answered and small sentence-level or broad writing process related skills are quickly addressed.

*How can my students make appointments?*

* Use the online scheduler link on the [Writing Center homepage](https://www.lakeforest.edu/academics/resources/writingcenter/services.php)
* Email or call the Writing Center ([oakley@lakeforest.edu](mailto:oakley@lakeforest.edu); 847-735-5233)
* Note: Walk-in appointments cannot be reserved; they are first come, first served.

*How can I recommend students for standing appointments?*

* Contact the Coordinator or Dawn Abt-Perkins: [abtperkins@lakeforest.edu](mailto:abtperkins@lakeforest.edu)

*What happens if my student’s standing appointment is canceled due to poor attendance?*

* The student should use the online scheduler to make their own appointments before major due dates for the rest of the semester.
* If you or your student want to reinstate the standing appointment, conference with your student about their specific writing goals and then contact Coordinator to see if there is room for your student.

*May I require all students in my course to attend Writing Center appointments?*

Generally, we do not recommend required appointments, but if you do require all students to visit, please contact the Coordinator in advance and use one of these approaches:

* Everyone in the course must visit once during the semester as part of class participation: You should stipulate whether shorter walk-in appointments will count or not; you should explain that if students do not schedule an appointment in advance, then it will be harder to find an available appointment.
* Everyone in the course must take their conference notes/your feedback along with their outline/draft to the Writing Center after meeting with you: Based on student needs, you should recommend either a 45-minute regular appointment for global and local issues or a 20-minute walk-in appointment for local-level, refinement issues.
* Everyone must visit once over a period of two weeks for a particular paper (please contact the Coordinator if you use this approach): You should explain that they should not come to brainstorm initial ideas and working thesis statements, but should come with a thesis idea or direction/topic you have approved; they should come ready to write argument statements or analysis statements about evidence with a tutor.

*If you do include some kind of required Center visit in your assignment/course structure, please tell your students verbally and in writing that*

* We have daytime walk-ins during all hours of operation: They can arrive at the start of the hour, and if a scheduled client does not arrive before ten past the hour, that tutor will work with them.
* We cannot guarantee walk-in appointments. So, if everyone tries for a day-time walk-in the morning or afternoon the day before the due date, or if everyone comes to evening walk-in hours a night or two before the due date, we cannot promise that we will be able to work with everyone.

*When should I encourage a student to visit the Writing Center?*

* After you have reviewed the student’s work and given specific, concrete feedback
* After you have conferenced with the student about a problematic structural, grammatical, or process-related pattern you have seen in their work
* After you have checked their comprehension of assignment expectations

*How much writing does a student have to finish before an appointment?*

* A student does not need to have a draft, but they should have a working understanding of the assignment, ideas they need help articulating, and if a research paper, a topic you have approved.
* A student who brings an annotated assignment sheet, an annotated text, evidence ideas, and a skeletal outline will have a more effective appointment.
* Students should not arrive with an assignment sheet they have not read or discussed with you and ask to brainstorm.

*What can I do to prepare my student for a Writing Center appointment?*

* Ensure students have a working understanding of the assignment expectations—including your purpose for the assignment, the central question(s) of the assignment, and the academic skill(s) being practiced
* Give them time to have read required material or completed preliminary research before meeting with a tutor
* Meet with them during office hours to clarify thesis statement expectations, approve research topics, brainstorm approaches or avenues of inquiry, or verbally explain your written feedback on a draft

*What can I do to prepare tutors to work with my students?*

* Tutors are best at structural revisions—not analyzing assignment sheets and brainstorming, so sending students with your feedback regarding concrete plans and/or your detailed expectations will help them help your students.
* Send the Coordinator your assignment sheet and your goals so they can educate tutors about 1) what to prioritize with your students and 2) when to send your students back to you with major questions.
* Send a model paper or several model thesis statements illustrating conventions in your discipline that tutors can study.

*Can I ask tutors to help individual students with specific skills or essay elements?*

* Send special directions to the Coordinator; she will instruct the tutor as needed
* Send written comments on a draft or via email with your student; then, tell the Coordinator to ensure the tutor asks to see professor feedback

*Will I know if students visit or how often they visit the Writing Center?*

* Students can choose whether or not to tell you they visited.
* After every session, the tutor writes a Session Report; this report is sent by default, but if a student asks us not to send the report, we will not send it to you.
* Contact the Coordinator regarding any attendance questions or for standing appointment attendance reports.

*How will I know what my students accomplish with their tutor?*

* A Session Report written by the tutor will be emailed to you
* The report will summarize what your student brought, what the tutor helped them develop, and what written work your student accomplished during the session.
* The Coordinator can check for more details with the tutor if you have further questions

*What kinds of strategies and skills will tutors teach my students?*

Tutors try to answer your students’ immediate questions while still incorporating writing process skills that can be applied to any academic paper. They might:

* Show students how to write signal phrases to better introduce evidence (e.g. Psychologist Ellen Smith advocates for leniency when she writes, “…”).
* Help students evaluate the order of their ideas by asking questions about the logical connections between each claim or main idea
* Write the same transition using three different conjunctions (e.g., Besides, While, Even though).
* Discuss ways to outline an introduction and then show students a handout regarding conventional introduction structure and content
* Advise students to always develop an implication question for a conclusion paragraph (e.g. If businesses continue to upgrade technology at a fast-pace, [what might happen?])

*What should I expect to see in drafts a tutor has worked on with my student?*

* Tutor are trained to prioritize a major global issue and then target a local issue as time allows. Thus, you should expect to see improved argument structure or idea flow, not overall clarity or clean copy.
* You might see a strong paragraph developed with a tutor followed by a weaker paragraph the student developed or revised independently; you might see inconsistent improvements in grammar and style.

*What do tutors say to students about grades?*

* Tutors listen sympathetically to grade concerns, but they are trained to never comment on or guess a paper’s grade.
* They are trained to discuss students’ writing in terms of clarity from an outside reader’s perspective: “As a reader, I wondered/was unsure/did not realize X” or “Readers might question/wonder/not know X.”

*What resources can the Writing Center provide for my class?*

* We have handouts for students on our Student Resources webpage; we have links to award-winning model essays on our Writing at Lake Forest webpage.
* Contact the Director of Writing Programs and Coordinator for specific needs.
* Contact the Director of Writing Programs for in-class writing workshops that focus on a particular skill or stage of the writing process.

*How often can a student use the Writing Center?*

* Students can visit the Writing Center two-three times a week as long as they are working independently between sessions. In other words, they cannot use tutors to complete every step of the paper without trying to do the next step on their own.
* They cannot schedule a two-hour appointment for the same paper.
* They cannot use the online scheduler to reserve the same time on the same day with the same tutor.

*Can I send pairs or small groups to work with a tutor?*

Yes—however, please let the Coordinator know this may be happening and why.

*How can I support non-native speakers and writers developing fluency?*

* Review the “Supporting International and Bilingual Students” section on the [Faculty Resources](https://www.lakeforest.edu/academics/resources/writingcenter/faculty.php) webpage—particularly the “Helpful Practices for Working with International/Bilingual Students and Their Tutors” document
* Correlate your feedback on drafts to the Detailed Menu at the back of the Hacker manual
* Contact the Coordinator for student resource ideas including online grammar checkers and vocabulary websites
* Contact the Coordinator for questions regarding workshops specifically for writers developing fluency
* Ask the Coordinator to review a piece of the student’s writing so she can better recommend particular strategies, resources, or ways to use the Center

How Librarians Can Assist FIYS Faculty and Students

Contact Cory Stevens ([cstevens@lakeforest.edu](mailto:cstevens@lakeforest.edu)) or Kim Hazlett ([hazlett@lakeforest.edu](mailto:hazlett@lakeforest.edu))

With enough lead time, librarians can:

* Produce and embed full citation (including in-text) for Moodle readings that will be used in papers (contact librarians during the summer)
* At the reference desk, review student papers for correct documentation (in-text and bibliography/works cited/references)
* Grade student bibliographies and sources following library instruction
* Work with individual students during research process for a specific paper (ask them to schedule appointment by contacting Kim or Cory, or by stopping at the reference desk next to Circulation—the desk will be staffed less frequently than before)
* Visit your course briefly at start of semester to introduce themselves and set up student library accounts; lead research sessions later in semester, geared toward specific assignment
* Build course-specific online research guides (these can be embedded in course’s Moodle page as well as on library website)

Please note:

* Please send Miriam Heard your reserve lists as soon as possible – even if you don’t know all the books you’d like on reserve, the more she can get done over the summer, the better.  Any FIYS courses that are film-intensive, please talk to Miriam or Cory regarding DVDs and reserves.
* The library will be doing a study of FIYS students and library usage; FIYS students who come to the reference desk will be invited to join the study.  The study will attempt to determine whether reference desk usage enables students to perform better academically.  The data will be reported only in aggregate, and even the librarians won’t know details regarding individual students and their grades. The study is grant-funded through CARLI (our library consortium) and has been approved by the College’s human subjects review board.
* ILLiad (used to request articles that we don’t have full text access to and also for books that aren’t in I-Share) is being replaced by Tipasa this summer (July).

**Stage 1: Focus the Assignment**

* Annotate assignment sheet for key requirements
* Determine major components (format, length, expectations)
* Identify purpose of the assignment within context of overall course goals
* Connect assignment to concepts in class notes/discussions
* Connect assignment to class texts and handouts
* Review professor’s explanations of the assignment (notes, emails, prompts)
* Compare this assignment to previous papers: What is new? What is the same?
* Contact professor to clarify expectations
* Propose a focus and plan for the professor

**Stage 2: Follow a Process**

* Define steps: What do I need to do and in what order?
* Create a timeline (write goals, calendar deadlines)
* Reread class notes for specific assignment-related purpose(s)
* Annotate text(s), write gist summaries (6 rhetorical questions—Who, What, Where, When, Why and For Whom) and paraphrases
* Freewrite and use charts and visuals to brainstorm and begin argument mapping/development
* Select appropriate evidence
* Analyze connections between evidence; use freewriting to generate ideas
* Develop a working thesis
* Skeletal outline—plan flow, topic sentences, transitions
* Plan introduction and conclusion

**Stage 3: Draft the Paper**

* Outline with evidence, source documentation, and transitions
* Draft one paragraph at a time; frame evidence in an analytical context; leave introduction and conclusion for last
* Connect ideas within paragraphs smoothly
* Develop new ideas and evidence as logical argument needs or opportunities arise
* Revise the working thesis
* Revise paragraphs for logical flow and meaningful transitions
* Write a “so what?” conclusion
* Establish context or problem in the introduction that your thesis addresses
* Edit to eliminate repetition and vague language
* Proofread for punctuation, correct source documentation, and format

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| WHEN | WHAT (ungraded) | HOW | RESOURCES |
| ASAP in course | Assign annotation of text under discussion | Use as basis of instruction in annotation | [Reading to Write: Annotating and Summarizing Strategies](https://www.lakeforest.edu/live/files/2869-active-reading-and-summarizing-strategiespdf); [Save Time by Annotating](https://www.lakeforest.edu/live/files/4403-savetimebyannotating-editedpdf) |
| When you distribute assignment | Allow time for students to complete some of the steps in Stage 1 on p. 10 | Ask students to annotate assignment sheet *before* you explain. Then use prompts like: What ideas come to mind in response to the assignment? Which texts/class discussions? What will your next steps be? | [Overcoming Writing Anxiety](https://www.lakeforest.edu/live/files/4404-overcoming-writing-anxiety-51413-editedpdf); [Assessing the Assignment Sheet](https://www.lakeforest.edu/live/files/1766-getting-startedassessing-the-assignment-sheet); [Brainstorming: Questions to Focus Your Thoughts](https://www.lakeforest.edu/live/files/2910-brainstorming-and-critical-thinking-questions-to) |
| Before paper deadline | Assign to bring “gist summaries” of text(s) to be used in paper (see resource) | Use as basis of workshop in brainstorming ideas for paper | [Reading to Write: Annotating and Summarizing Strategies](https://www.lakeforest.edu/live/files/2869-active-reading-and-summarizing-strategiespdf) |
| Before paper deadline | Assign to bring potential evidence for papers | Use as basis of workshop on how to analyze and present evidence, including paraphrase | [Ways to Use and Present Evidence: Summarize, Paraphrase, Quote](https://www.lakeforest.edu/live/files/4413-waysusepresentevidence52918pdf); [Evidence Chart](https://www.lakeforest.edu/live/files/4760-evidence-chart-sample-and-templatepdf) |
| Before paper deadline | Ask students to bring a working thesis and skeletal outline | Use as basis of workshop on argument and thesis statements | [Building a Thesis Statement](https://www.lakeforest.edu/live/files/3803-building-a-thesis-statement-handout5417pdf);  [Three Outline Stages](http://www.lakeforest.edu/live/files/4415-three-outline-stages52918pdf) |
| Revision (before or after feedback) | Ask students to bring complete draft | Use as basis of workshop on revision | [Backwards Outlining a Draft](http://www.lakeforest.edu/live/files/4415-three-outline-stages52918pdf); [Revising with a Backwards Outline](http://www.lakeforest.edu/live/files/3813-revising-with-the-backwards-outline050417pdf) |
| Conferences | Prioritize items for revision | Make sure student leaves conference with understanding of revision priorities, notes written on a draft, and a written plan for next steps |  |
| Submit with paper | A reflection on the steps that student used to write paper | Make suggestions on how to approach future papers | Student can answer questions like: what worked best for you? What would you do differently next time? How did you implement any feedback? |
| A FINAL TIP |  |  |  |
| Grading sentence-level errors  (Resource: [Developing a Grammar Grading Philosophy](http://www.lakeforest.edu/live/files/2101-suggestions-for-developing-a-grammar-grading)) | Your feedback: avoid simply correcting errors unless you somehow assign analysis of what you’ve corrected. Avoid marking *all* sentence-level errors: students will be overwhelmed. | Prioritize one or two repeated sentence-level errors that most impede meaning (I can help). | Tell student to focus on learning to avoid these errors, with help from a tutor. See “Grammar and Style Review” at bottom of [this page](http://www.lakeforest.edu/academics/resources/writingcenter/students.php) for modules that students can complete on specific errors and review with tutors. |

This [detailed guide](https://www.lakeforest.edu/live/files/2099-stages-of-the-research-paper) (to be updated) will help you break down the research paper into steps for your students.

**Summer Assignment, Part 1: Making Sense of the Text & Prewriting Prompts** (excerpt)

**Matt Kelley**

Reading

*R. U. R.* is a science fiction play that was published in 1921 by the Czech author Karel Čapek. In the play, Čapek coined the term “robot” to describe a manufactured being akin to the modern conception of an android. The play touches on themes of humanity, religion, evolution, consciousness, and the costs of scientific progress.

Purpose of Writing Assignment #1

Although *prewriting* is the critical first stage in the writing process, students often overlook or skip this step, usually because they have not allotted enough time for the writing process (e.g., procrastinated; started too late). The purpose of the present assignment is to demonstrate the importance of prewriting by having you respond to some general prompts/questions about what you’ve read in *R. U. R.* The questions should help you to organize your thoughts about the reading and will be critical to the development of the academic essay on this topic (Part 2 of the Summer Assignment).

General Prewriting Prompts

Below, you will find a series of general prewriting prompts that are designed to help you “unpack” the content of just about anything that you read. Please note that these are intended to get your thinking and writing and that an academic essay does not simply answer each question.

* Which passages in the text strike you as most important?  Why do they interestyou and what questions they raise?
* What are the key themes, points, and/or arguments? What terms or concepts do you need to understand the key themes, points, and arguments?
* What roles do fact, opinion, and theory play in the text? How might the author’s ethical, moral, political, or religious views influence the text?
* What is “not there” in the text, but either is implied or ignored by the author? What questions do these absences raise in your mind? What kinds of information or analysis are needed to address these questions?
* Are you persuaded by the author’s points or arguments? Why or why not? What are your opinions on the themes and arguments and why do you have them?

Assignment

After reading *R. U. R.*, choose 4 of the 5 prewriting prompts from above. For each of these prompts, I want you to perform 5 minutes of “free writing,” in which you will write whatever comes to mind in response to that prompt: non-stop, without making corrections, and without censoring your thoughts. . . .

Excerpts from the Kenyon College commencement speech by David Foster Wallace, 2005

Let's talk about the single most pervasive cliché in the commencement speech genre, which is that a liberal arts education is not so much about filling you up with knowledge as it is about . . . teaching you how to think.

1. [T]he liberal arts cliché about teaching you how to think is actually shorthand for a much deeper, more serious idea: learning how to think really means learning how to exercise some control over how and what you think. It means being conscious and aware enough to choose what you pay attention to and to choose how you construct meaning from experience.

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1. [T]he freedom of a real education . . . . [is that] you get to consciously decide what has meaning and what doesn't. You get to decide what to worship.

If you worship money and things, if they are where you tap real meaning in life, then you will never have enough, never feel you have enough. . . . Worship your body and beauty and sexual allure and you will always feel ugly. And when time and age start showing, you will die a million deaths before they finally grieve you. Worship power, you will end up feeling weak and afraid, and you will need ever more power over others to numb you to your own fear. Worship your intellect, being seen as smart, you will end up feeling stupid, a fraud, always on the verge of being found out.

But the insidious thing about these forms of worship is not that they're evil or sinful, it's that they're unconscious. They are default settings. They're the kind of worship you just gradually slip into, day after day, getting more and more selective about what you see and how you measure value without ever being fully aware that that's what you're doing.

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1. [T]he real value of a real education . . . has almost nothing to do with knowledge, and everything to do with simple awareness; awareness of what is so real and essential, so hidden in plain sight all around us, all the time . . . .

How and Why to Engage in Writing-Based Teaching: Some of the Basics

Writing together is a powerful way to create a learning community. Doing so frequently during the semester, even if briefly, also conveys the message that writing is a way of thinking. In-class writing increases students’ fluency as writers and thinkers; they learn that they have ideas and can get them down on the page.

General guidelines

* Write with your students to convey that you value the practice
* Before giving a prompt, tell students for how many minutes you would like them to write and that you will keep time. Or, tell them how much space to aim to fill (e.g. a half-page) in response to the prompt
* When nearing the time when you would like them to finish, say something like: “let’s write for one more minute.” Wrap up by saying something like: “Find a place to stop.”
* If a student writes only briefly, you can say something like “let’s keep our pens moving.” I don’t explicitly direct such statements at any particular student. If the student doesn’t keep writing, so be it.
* Before giving a prompt, tell students that you will not collect or grade the writing. Clarify whether the writing is private or to be shared. Say that you will give them a chance to decide what part of their writing to read aloud.

Other tips

* You don’t have to insist that students read from their writing. They can use it as a springboard to explain their ideas. But asking them to read does several things: it tends to elicit more listening from other students, and it can encourage quieter students to share more of their ideas since they know they can rely on the words they have written.
* If you don’t have time to hear from everyone, you can ask for volunteers, or have every other person read, or call on people, or say you will hear from a certain number of people.

Simple ways to use prompts

* Give a prompt to set the stage for the class focus. Keep it simple. It can be as general as: “What was most surprising/confusing/striking to you about the reading?” “What is one idea or thought that has stayed with you from the reading?”
* Give a prompt after students read, view, or hear a detail of a written, visual, or oral/aural text). Ask: “What did you notice about X?” or “What stood out to you?” After hearing some of these responses, you can move to prompts that require more complex thinking: “How is this detail important in light of X?” “How does this passage help you understand X?”
* Give a prompt in the middle of class or at the end of class when you want students to summarize, reflect, or synthesize: “What are the most important points/ideas we’ve discussed up till now?” “What are the implications of X for Y?” “What are you confused about?” ((you could collect their answers to this prompt and address the confusion in some way, such as in the next class)

General rule for prompts: keep them short, straightforward, and open-ended. Long, complicated prompts elicit requests for explanation and may make students suspect that you are looking for a specific answer.